

Message Text

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QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 5620

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, SHUM, UNGA, UG

SUBJECT: THE UN AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA

REFS: A. USUN 5538; B. USUN 5532

1. SUMMARY. AT THIS MOMENT, A PRECARIOUS BARGAIN HAS BEEN STRUCK--RESTING UPON A HARD-WON CONSENSUS AMONG THE AFRICAN GROUP THAT THEY MUST TAKE SOME ACTION AMONG THEMSELVES TO RECOGNIZE THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION IN UGANDA. THE NORDICS ARE JUBILANT, THE UK IS GRUMBLING THAT MORE MUST BE DONE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FINNISH DELEGATION TOOK THE LEAD AMONG THE NORDICS IN DRAFTING, PUSHING, AND NEGOTIATING THE RESOLUTION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN UGANDA, WHICH WAS LEFT ON THE TABLE AS
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REPORTED IN REFTEL A. THE PERMREP FROM NORWAY (ALGARD) ALSO WAS KEY, BUT IN GENERAL THE NORICS REMAIN UNITED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS, THOUGH THE SWEDES WERE PASSIVE AND THE DANES SEVERAL TIMES PRESSED TO WITHDRAW THE RESOLUTION BEFORE AFRICAN INTRANSIGENCE. MISOFF KEPT UK INFORMED, WHOSE SKEPTICISM TURNED INTO NEARLY A SENSE OF PROPRIETORSHIP AND RESENTMENT AS THE INITIATIVE SHOWED SIGNS OF SUCCEEDING.

3. THE NORDIC GOALS APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN: 1) TO PROVIDE A SITUATION IN WHICH THE AFRICAN NATIONS WHO SO DESIRED COULD EXERCISE POSITIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE AFRICAN GROUP TO CONFRONT THE UGANDAN SITUATION; 2) TO RAISE THE ISSUE WITH DIGNITY AND LEGITIMACY IN THE UN IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT COULD NOT BE AUTOMATICALLY DISMISSED BY UGANDA AND ITS ALLIES AS A "WHITE-MAN'S" INTERVENTION; E) TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE WESTERN DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUENCIES THAT THERE IS SOME HOPE OF OVERCOMING THE UN'S DOUBLE-STANDARD IN DEALING WITH "MASSIVE AND GROSS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS."

4) IF POSSIBLE, TO HAVE A PUBLIC AIRING OF THE ISSUE TO PROMOTE THE ABOVE THREE PURPOSES. THE MAJORITY OF AFRICAN NATIONS SEEMED TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING GOALS: 1) TO MAINTAIN THE PUBLIC UNITY OF THE AFRICAN CAUCUS, 2) TO AVOID "EMBARRASSMENT" OF HAVING AN AFRICAN NATION SINGLED OUT FOR CRITICISM BEFORE THE UN, AND 3) TO DEEPEN THEIR OWN CONSENSUS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE UGANDAN ONE ON A REGIONAL LEVEL.

4. THE UK DELEGATION (MARSHALL AND EDIS) FEEL THAT THE NORDICS "SOLD OUT TOO CHEAP." THEY INSIST THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO HAVE THE ISSUE FORMALLY REFERRED TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION IN A VOTE, RATHER THAN A STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, AND THAT THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN A DEBATE. ON THE OTHER HAND,

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USUN HAS ARGUED THAT THE IMPORTANT DYNAMIC IS NOT A UN ONE, BUT AN AFRICAN ONE, AND THAT IF THE GOAL IS REALLY THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SITUATION IN UGANDA, THEN THE STRENGTHENING OF THE SENSE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND RESOLVE OF THE AFRICANS IS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN EITHER A DEBATE OR A VOTE IN THE UN. AT ANY RATE, THE FOLLOWING POSITIVE RESULTS CAN BE IDENTIFIED FROM THIS EXERCISE:

1) THE UGANDAN ITEM IS "ON THE TABLE," IN THE REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE TO THE PLENARY, AND THE CO-SPONSORS CAN EITHER BEGIN TO DEBATE IT OR CALL FOR A VOTE AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME IN THE FUTURE, EVEN AT PLENARY (DEC 16).

2. THERE IS A GENERAL EXPECTATION--BUT NO CERTAINTY--THAT THE ITEM WILL BE DEALT WITH IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WHERE, IN FACT, ANYBODY CAN BRING IT UP AS A PUBLIC MATTER ANYWAY. THE QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER IT WILL BE DEALT WITH UNDER THE PROCEDURES OF 1503 (PRIVATELY,) OR PUBLICLY; 3) THE SENSE OF AFRICAN UNITY HAS BEEN MAINTAINED, AND THERE IS A NEW SENSE OF AFRICAN COMPETENCE AND DETERMINATION. 4) THE NORDICS ARE SATISFIED, AND HAVE MAINTAINED GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE AFRICANS DURING THE WHOLE EPISODE, AND WERE GREATLY IMPRESSED AT THE GREAT EFFORT THAT THE AFRICANS MADE TO ACHIEVE CONSENSUS.

5) THE NIGERIAN INITIATIVE ON REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS WAS NO DOUBT TAKEN IN GREAT PART BECAUSE OF THE UGANDA SITUATION. 6) THERE IS NOW SOME PRESSURE FOR THE OAU TO PREEMPT THE UN IN TAKING ACTION TO CONFRONT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN UGANDA. 7) THE UGANDANS ARE DISCONCERTED--THE APPEAL TO AFRICAN UNITY AGAINST ANY CRITICISM OF ANY ONE DID NOT WORK. 8) THE WHOLE EXERCISE WAS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE GROWING TENDENCY TO BREAK-UP THE EASY USE OF AFRICANS BY ARABS AND EASTERN EUROPEANS AS AN AUTOMATIC ANTI-WESTERN BLOC.

5. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE NORDICS HAD NOT ACCEPTED THE AFRICAN PLAN AND ASKED THE CHAIRMAN OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE TO MAKE THE STATEMENT AND PASSED OVER THE ISSUE
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WITHOUT DEBATE AND WITHOUT VOTE, THE AFRICANS MOST WILLING TO TAKE UP THE ISSUE WOULD HAVE BEEN DISCREDITED IN THEIR OWN GROUP, AND A NEW UNITY OF THE OAU ON NEGATIVE GROUNDS WOULD HAVE BEEN DELIVERED INTO THE HANDS OF THE ENEMIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS: 1) THAT APPROPRIATE APPRECIATION TO PASTINEN (PERMREP FINLAND) AND ALGARD (PERMREP NORWAY) BE EXPRESSED, AND PERHAPS EVEN AT HELSINKI. 2) THAT APPRECIATION BE EXPRESSED TO THE PERMREP OF CAMEROON (FERDINAND OYONO) FOR HIS GREAT SKILL AND PATIENCE IN NEGOTIATING, AND HIS INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS, AND IN STRENGTHENING THE OAU. 3. THAT APPRECIATION BE EXPRESSED TO AMBASSADOR HARRIMAN (PERMREP NIGERIA) FOR THE KEY ROLE HE PLAYED IN THE UGANDAN SITUATION, AND IN THE NIGERIAN INITIATIVE AS WELL. 4) IMMEDIATE CONSULTATION WITH NORDICS ABOUT STRATEGY FOR THE PLENARY DEC. 16, AND SUBSEQUENT CONSULTATION WITH UK. 5) CIRCULATION OF A DOCUMENT, AS AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE US, THROUGH UN CHANNELS, ALONG LINES OF SUGGESTED STATEMENT IN PARA 9 BELOW. THE PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT WOULD BE TO KEEP THE LEVERAGE AVAILABLE BY MENTIONING IMPLICITLY THE OPTIONS TO NON-PERFORMANCE OF THE AFRICANS.

7. LONGER RANGE RECOMMENDATIONS: THAT PERHAPS THE US COULD COMPILE IN ONE DOCUMENT ALL THE NGO STUDIES AVAILABLE TO BE DISTRIBUTED BY THE USG AT THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETINGS, THUS GIVING SOME MORE LEGITIMACY TO THE GOOD WORK FOR THE NGO'S. 2) THAT PERHAPS THE US COULD ENCOURAGE NIGERIA TO BRING TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION A STRONG SPOKESMAN, SUCH AS AYENI WHO SHEPHERDED THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PROPOSAL THROUGH THE THIRD COMMITTEE, TO HELP ON THE UGANDA ISSUE THERE. 3) THAT
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PERHAPS THE US COULD ENCOURAGE OTHER AFRICANS TO TAKE THE LEAD IN THE OAU.

8. THE FINNS ARE CONSULTING DEC 13 WITH THE SECRETARIAT AS TO THE EXACT WORDING THAT WILL BE IN THE THIRD COMMITTEE REPORT AS IT IS TRANSMITTED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THE UK IS DEMANDING THAT IT SHOW WHAT IN FACT, THE FINNS ARGUE, IT CANNOT, THAT A DECISION WAS TAKEN TO TRANSMIT THE MATTER TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. BECAUSE THIS DECISION WAS NOT FORMALLY MADE, AND BECAUSE THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE BEING RAISED IS AN INFORMAL, DELICATE AND AMBIGUOUS ONE, THE UK IS THINKING ABOUT MAKING A STATEMENT AT THE PLENARY. THEY WERE, IN FACT, EVIDENTLY UNDER FIRM INSTRUCTIONS TO GIVE A LOW-KEY STATEMENT IN THIRD COMMITTEE, AND WERE ONLY DISSUADED BY URGENT APPEALS FROM PASTINEN TO MARSHALL, WHO HAD TO TELEPHONE HIS PERMREP FOR PERMISSION NOT TO SPEAK AT ALL, AS THE NORDICS AND AFRICANS HAD AGREED.

9. FOLLOWING IS PROPOSED STATEMENT: QUOTE
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THE TABLING OF L.49, "THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN UGANDA" AND THE INTENSE CONSULTATION AMONG MANY DELEGATIONS ON THIS RESOLUTION, AS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN SUPPORTING THE NATIONS OF AFRICA AND THE PEOPLE OF UGANDA IN THEIR STRUGGLE TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE COUNTRY, AND THE RESTORATION TO IT OF SECURITY OF THE PERSON AND RULE BY LAW.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WAS WILLING TO FOREGO PUBLIC DEBATE OF THIS MATTER, AND A VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION AT THIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN THE FIRM EXPECTATION THAT CREATIVE STEPS ARE UNDERWAY THAT WILL LEAD TO THE EFFECTIVE CONSIDERATION OF THIS PROBLEM AT THE UP-COMING HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING, AND AMONG THE STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY.

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THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WISHES TO EXPRESS ITS APPRECIATION TO THE NATIONS THAT UNDERTOOK THIS INITIATIVE. UNQUOTE
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